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Haig: Trusted Defender of An Embattled President

The General
And His Record — I

Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., Ronald Reagan's choice to be America's next secretary of state, has had an extraordinary career in public service, one that has repeatedly put him at the center of the biggest political storms of recent American history.

Although Haig is a controversial selection for the Reagan Cabinet, his career has given him one indisputable credential. The president-elect could have found only one other American with comparable personal experiences to take over the State Department. That other person is Henry Kissinger, whom the Reagan camp rejected as too controversial.

That Haig should be acceptable when Kissinger is not illustrates one of the general's most striking qualities, his ability to win the favor of other people. Those ultraconservatives in the Republican Party who rejected Kissinger made Kissinger's protege and former sidekick, Haig, their first choice for the State Department job. But he was also Kissinger's first choice. And Richard Nixon's. And Leon Jaworski's.

On the other hand, Haig is decidedly not the preferred choice of most Democrats in the Senate. Senate Democratic leaders have already promised to closely scrutinize the Haig nomination before voting on his confirmation. The Democrats, though, are now the minority party; Republicans will control the full body and the Foreign Relations Committee, and may be able to push the Haig nomination through the confirmation process relatively quickly.

Because of his involvement in the Indochina war, the wiretapping at the beginning of the first Nixon administration, the Watergate affair at the end of the Nixon presidency and other controversial episodes, a thorough Senate inquiry into Haig's past would be a drawn-out affair. Reagan, however, has indicated a desire to swear in his entire Cabinet on Inauguration Day, Jan. 20.

Today The Washington Post begins a series of articles on Haig's past, describing events that are likely to raise questions during the hearings and debate on Haig's nomination. In this installment, Haig's role in the Watergate period is reviewed.

Haig spent nearly 16 months as President Nixon's chief of staff. During that period, the White House devoted most of its efforts to defending Nixon from the charges of John Dean that he obstructed justice. Nixon spent long hours on his own defense during those months. But White House logs and accounts of dozens of former White House aides indicate that Haig spent even more time defending the president than Nixon did himself.

In May 1973, when Nixon realized that his two most trusted aides — H.R. (Bob) Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman — were going to be forced to resign because of their involvement in the Watergate affair, he turned to Haig. The general had been Kissinger's deputy at the National Security Council for the first two years of the Nixon administration, and was Army vice chief of staff on May 4, 1973, when the White House announced that Haig would be an "interim" chief of the presidential staff.

Haig was a favorite inside the Nixon White House. Just a week before he was asked to take over Haldeman's job, Haig had been the subject of an approving conversation in the Oval Office between Haldeman and Nixon. The topic under discussion was apparently one of the sensitive episodes that fell under the "Watergate" rubric, the trial in California of Daniel J. Ellsberg, the man who leaked the Pentagon Papers.

Haig did a great job out there, Haldeman told Nixon, according to a previously unpublished transcript of the tape recording of this conversation made by Nixon's automatic taping device. Nixon agreed with this assessment of Haig's testimony at the trial, where the general had been used as a prosecution witness to rebut testimony offered in Ellsberg's defense.

At the time Haldeman and Nixon talked, they and Haig were three of a tiny circle of men who knew that the Nixon White House had ordered 17 wiretaps on government officials and journalists' private telephones in the early months of the administration — a fact that finally became public knowledge five days later during the same Ellsberg trial. As a trusted confidant, Haig was unable to focus exclusively on policy matters as Nixon had hoped.

Instead, Watergate became Haig's preoccupation from the moment he arrived at the White House. One of his first acts was to ask the Pentagon's general counsel, J. Fred Buzhardt, to join the White House staff to deal with accusations against Nixon growing out of the Watergate affair. Haig, Buzhardt, lawyer Leonard Garment and Nixon's two principal speechwriters quickly went to work preparing a "national security" rationale for the wiretapping and other questionable activities that the president now acknowledged, including the

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so-called "Huston Plan" for illegal intelligence-gathering, the break-in at the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist and the order that the CIA tell the FBI to end its investigation of the original Watergate burglary.

The statement these men prepared, released on May 22, five days after the Senate Watergate Committee began its investigation, was intended to blunt Sen. Sam Ervin's (D-N.C.) inquiry and put Watergate to rest. It was the first of numerous such efforts that Haig was to manage from his catbird seat in the White House.

The failure of that first effort could be attributed largely to John Dean, former White House counsel. Leaks to the press on June 3 tipped off Nixon and Haig that Dean planned to testify to the Senate committee that Nixon himself participated in the cover-up of Watergate. This news prompted Nixon to play back some of the tapes of his Oval Office meetings, and then to discuss their contents with Haig (Haig was one of the handful of Nixon aides who already knew about the existence of the president's taping system).

This happened on June 4. Nixon and Haig conferred about the tapes eight different times during that busy day. Haig was coordinating the White House effort to use the tapes to create a selective account that would refute Dean's detailed testimony, which he had to construct from memory. In those June 4 conversations Haig learned from Nixon of what the president considered his "one problem" — the damn conversation of March 21.

Nixon explained to Haig that he discussed clemency for Watergate burglars on that March 21 tape, a fact that the White House did not acknowledge for another 11 months. Nixon told Haig that this problem could be "well handled."

Five months later, after the existence of the president's taping system had been revealed, Haig was briefing Republican senators on Capitol Hill, assuring them that the tape of that crucial March 21 meeting between Nixon and Dean was "exculpatory."

After three months of refusing to comply with subpoenas for White House tapes from both the Senate Watergate Committee and Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, Nixon in October faced a court order to finally produce the recordings. At that point and Haig and Buzhardt proposed a "compromise." They suggested prepar-

ing edited transcripts of some of the subpoenaed recordings and asking the venerable (and partially deaf) Sen. John Stennis (D-Miss.) to listen to them and affirm that the transcripts were a fair portrayal of the actual tapes.

Haig and Buzhardt went to Stennis to propose this arrangement, leaving him with the impression that the transcripts being prepared would be for the use of the Watergate Committee, not to satisfy a court subpoena for the actual tapes. But Haig and Buzhardt hoped to persuade Cox and the court to accept the transcripts as well. (Had he known this, Stennis said later, he would have declined to play any role in the arrangement.) It was Cox's refusal to accept the Stennis plan that set off the "Saturday Night Massacre," another important moment that involved Haig personally.

On that October Saturday, Haig telephoned Attorney General Elliot Richardson and ordered him to fire Cox. When Richardson refused and resigned his post, Haig called Deputy Attorney General William Ruckelshaus and asked if he was prepared to dismiss Cox. The answer was no.

"Well, you know what it means when an order comes down from the commander-in-chief, and a member of the team can't execute it," Haig told Ruckelshaus, according to his own subsequent account. Haig then asked Robert Bork, the solicitor general, if he would dismiss Cox, and Bork agreed to do it.

That night, teams of FBI agents sealed off the special prosecutor's offices on K Street NW, and at Richardson's office in the Justice Department, effectively impounding their files. At a press conference later, Haig said he personally had ordered the FBI to seal off those offices "because we had reports that members of the staff were leaving rapidly with huge bundles under their arms."

The furor caused by the Saturday Night Massacre persuaded the White House to agree to relinquish the subpoenaed tapes to Judge John J. Sirica's court, but not to the Senate committee. Almost immediately, however, Haig learned that no tapes of two of the subpoenaed conversations could be found, and that a subpoenaed Dictabelt of Nixon's recollections of another conversation was missing.

Moreover, when Nixon was told that the Dictabelt couldn't be found, he had asked, "Why can't we make a new Dictabelt?" The president's willingness to manufacture evidence, Haig knew, had persuaded Nixon's two lawyers, Buzhardt and Garment, that Nixon had to resign the presidency. (A detailed account of this episode never disputed by any of the participants appears in *The Final Days* by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein.)

In addition, Haig learned at this time that Rose Mary Woods, Nixon's secretary, had said that she had inadvertently erased a four-minute section on one of the subpoenaed tapes, a section which White House lawyers hoped (without knowing for sure) was not covered by the subpoena.

Despite all these problems, Haig launched a new White House offensive called "Operation Candor" in early November. This was an effort to persuade Congress and the public that there were no more startling dramatic revelations still to come. In a series of nine meetings, Nixon, sometimes accompanied by Haig, met with 234 Republican members of Congress and 46 Democrats, telling them all there would be no more bombshells.

On Nov. 14, 1973, Haig learned simultaneously that the gap Woods had revealed actually lasted 18½ minutes, and that this section of the tape was indeed covered by the subpoena. Haig waited a day — a day on which Nixon met with another 78 congressmen to proclaim his innocence — before telling the president about these new problems. A week later Operation Candor disintegrated in the furor provoked by the public acknowledgment of the 18½-minute gap.

Haig was called to Sirica's courtroom to explain what had caused the gap. Haig said it might have been caused by an unexplained "sinister force" that had "come in and applied [another] energy source and taken care of the information on that tape."

At this same time, White House lawyers who had been listening to Nixon's tapes told Haig the full substance of that March 21 conversation which Nixon had told Haig in early June was a problem.

When Dean had told the president "we're being blackmailed," and that White House aides were perjuring themselves — the lawyers told Haig — Nixon asked Dean, "How much money do you need?"

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"I would say these people are going to cost a million dollars over the next two years," Dean replied.

"We could get that," Nixon said. "I mean, you could get the money... you could get a million dollars. And you could get it in cash..."

Later in the conversation, the lawyers told Haig, Nixon had recommended continuing to pay the burglars' demands for "blackmail."

The White House reaction to the discovery of this conversation was to prepare a selective, heavily edited transcript of it. On Dec. 22 Haig took portions of this transcript to the Senate minority leader, Hugh Scott (R-Pa.), who had been urging release of the tapes. Haig said he would show this material to Scott provided the senator would never say that he had seen any tape transcripts. Scott agreed and started to read, but Haig insisted on leaving with the transcripts before the senator had a chance to finish them.

Later Haig supervised a much more extensive effort to prepare selectively edited transcripts of tapes sought by the House Judiciary Committee.

These were the transcripts that contained repeated gaps covered by the terms "expletive deleted" or "material unrelated to presidential action."

On at least two occasions Haig sought to intervene on Nixon's behalf to influence the inquiries of the special prosecutors. In July 1973, Haig called Attorney General Richardson to make sure that Archibald Cox not extend his investigation into areas unrelated to the Watergate break-in, particularly including Nixon's finances.

The second instance occurred on April 30, 1974, when Haig called Deputy Attorney General Laurence H. Silberman and sought Justice Department support to limit the special prosecutor's (then Jaworski) grand jury investigation. Specifically, Haig sought Justice's help in acquiring internal memoranda from the special prosecutor's files that described dealings between Cox and Dean in 1973. The White House was looking for evidence that Cox had influenced Dean's testimony. Silberman refused this request and told Haig the "demand for internal memos from the special prosecutor's office" was "unprecedented."

On May 23, 1973, less than three weeks after he became chief of staff to Nixon, Haig called Secretary of the Treasury William E. Simon to ask the status of an Internal Revenue Service investigation of the president's friend Charles R. (Bebe) Rebozo. According to Simon, he checked and reported back to the White House that the IRS was interested in a \$100,000 cash payment to Rebozo by reclusive millionaire Howard R. Hughes which Rebozo claimed was a campaign contribution to Nixon.

According to Rebozo in testimony to the Ervin committee, shortly after this he returned exactly the same \$100,000 in cash to Hughes. Subsequently, Haig passed on to Rebozo's lawyer (according to the lawyer) information from a secret Federal Reserve Board study indicating that some of the hundred dollar bills Rebozo returned to Hughes appeared to have been issued after Rebozo said he originally received them from Hughes.

When Haig was subpoenaed to testify to the Ervin committee, he refused to answer questions, claiming a combination of executive privilege and attorney-client privilege, the latter on the grounds that he had been an intermediary between the president and his attorneys. Nixon instructed him to claim these privileges, Haig said.

Two weeks later, only after the Ervin committee rejected these claims to privilege, did Haig appear and testify on a few specific matters. However, Haig refused to answer questions — as he has since — about his broader role as the man Nixon depended on most during his last 16 months in office.

This report was written by staff writers Scott Armstrong, Robert G. Kaiser and Walter Pincus.

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Haig: Supervising the Nixon Wiretaps

The General And His Record — II

The memorandum on White House stationery, dated June 4, 1969, marked "TOP SECRET SENSITIVE" at top and bottom, begins:

"Express your appreciation to Mr. Hoover and Mr. Sullivan for their outstanding support in recent weeks in uncovering security problems with in the NSC staff. Inform Mr. Hoover that you have discussed these problems in detail with the President (and with Messrs. Haldeman and Ehrlichman)." *[The writer was then colonel Alexander M. Haig Jr., at the time a member of the National Security Council staff. The recipient was Haig's boss, Henry A. Kissinger. The purpose of the paper was to prepare Kissinger for a 9:30 a.m. meeting that morning with FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.]*

Ronald Reagan's selection of Haig to be his secretary of state is a controversial appointment, in part because of the role Haig played in those early months of the first Nixon administration. As this little-noticed memorandum that now lies in the records of a complex civil suit demonstrates, Haig was deeply involved in the program of wiretaps of government officials and reporters.

According to the records of the FBI, Haig was the White House official who formally requested 12 of the 17 wiretaps the White House initiated in those months. When questioned about this later, Haig testified that he could not remember requesting all of those wiretaps. He also insisted that the only names he ever gave to the FBI were supplied to him by either President Nixon or national security affairs adviser Kissinger. Haig is likely to be asked again about this episode when he goes before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee next month.

The "outstanding support" from Hoover that Haig referred to in that June 1969 memorandum were the raw logs and summaries Haig and Kissinger had seen of FBI wiretaps

that had been placed during the prior four weeks on five Kissinger staff members (and thus Haig's colleagues), plus Defense Secretary Melvin Laird's personal assistant and a British journalist who was a close friend of Kissinger.

By the time Kissinger was set to sit down with Hoover on June 4, the FBI had put together at least three detailed logs of conversations from the home telephone of Morton H. Halperin, one of the tapped NSC staffers. And Haig himself had visited FBI assistant director William Sullivan, at the latter's request, at least once to read those logs. Within a year he was to have made three other such visits to the FBI.

By June 4, two summaries of Halperin's conversations — and some of his wife's — had been sent by Hoover to Kissinger. Another report on the tap of NSC staff member Daniel Davidson had also been provided by the FBI director to Nixon as well as Kissinger.

What the June 4, "talking points" paper written by Haig shows, however, is that he was the NSC's operations officer for the controversial and highly secret program that was to become a major count in the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment case against Nixon.

The specific "security problems" that Haig's paper said Hoover's wiretaps helped uncover have yet to be fully disclosed. The generally stated aim of the wiretap program was to stop what Nixon and his top staff, led by Kissinger, considered a series of "leaks" of security information to reporters.

At a meeting on April 29, 1969, Nixon, Hoover, then attorney general John Mitchell and Kissinger discussed the need to take some strong action if leaks persisted. (Haig was not present at this meeting.) Wiretaps were mentioned as one option by Hoover, according to Kissinger and others, and the FBI director was given authority by Nixon to do whatever he believed necessary to find the leaker, the next time one occurred.

Eventually, however, the wiretaps were more useful for the political intelligence they provided than for protecting any national security information, according to findings of the House Judiciary Committee compiled during its impeachment proceedings against Nixon.

The taps began on May 9, 1969, on Halperin's home phone in the wake of a Kissinger complaint to Hoover about a New York Times story. The article disclosed the United States had been secretly bombing in Cambodia. Kissinger has since maintained that Nixon urged him to complain to Hoover.

The next day, Haig — in his new role as NSC operations officer for the tapping — visited Sullivan with the first of the names of the 17 individuals that would be tapped under the program.

What Haig has repeatedly said, however, is — as he told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1974 — "I never would have submitted a name that I did not get from Dr. Kissinger, or from the president with Dr. Kissinger's knowledge."

Haig and Kissinger in their testimony in various forums have presented an ambiguous view of the wiretap program.

As Haig said at one hearing: "We thought it was necessary. At the same time, I felt it was an awful lot of garbage involved in it."

Haig, however, often refused to be defensive about the wiretaps, frequently using an old rumor, spread by Hoover, to justify the whole program. At one hearing he declared, "In one instance, one of those people was a very, very prime suspect for espionage activity . . . It was a person who was alleged to me informally to have been an agent of a foreign government."

Haig was never asked at this session who that person was. But Hoover had early in the program spread the word that British newsman Henry Brandon, Washington correspondent for the Sunday Times of London, was a foreign spy, supposedly in the employ of either British or some communist country's intelligence service — an allegation that was refuted by many top U.S. officials who had reviewed the journalist's FBI records.

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Haig's reference, if indeed it was meant to apply to Brandon, was somewhat ironic. Brandon was a close friend of Kissinger's, and interviewed him regularly. And although the Brandon tap was kept on longer than any other except for Halperin, Brandon was given an exclusive interview with Nixon shortly after it was removed.

There was another Haig-Kissinger view of the tapping, reflected in Haig's statement to the Senate committee that "Dr. Kissinger, at the outset of this program was very concerned that he and we were suspect because of the character of the staff that we had put together...." In short, this was an investigation of the NSC staff being monitored by the only people Hoover and Nixon trusted.

That attitude — that Kissinger and his aide were themselves suspect — is apparent in Haig's June 4, 1969, memorandum to Kissinger, with its advice that Kissinger adopt an ingratiating approach to the FBI director.

For example, Haig's third point for Kissinger to make is, "Ask Mr. Hoover for his views on how we could proceed with Halperin, who has been involved in indiscretions and who obviously has a reputation for liberal views but who has yet to be firmly linked with a security breach."

Haig goes on to suggest that his boss hide his own feelings. "I think it best that you seek Mr. Hoover's advice in this instance while avoiding any specific comments pro or con and especially avoiding any opinions on this matter." It was the sort of careful bureaucratic formula that Haig himself has followed in his long career.

The final point on Haig's June 4 memo hinted at the strains the wiretapping program caused for Haig and Kissinger. "Ask Mr. Hoover if he has any additional information or guidance which he feels would be helpful in this very difficult situation," Haig wrote.

Haig added parenthetically, "I think in the case of Halperin and Brandon, that they should be kept on for at least another two weeks so that a pattern of innocence can be firmly established." In fact, the taps remained on Halperin's and Brandon's telephones for another year and a half.

Haig has volunteered one memory on an aspect of the wiretaps that raises a question about his role in withholding information from the judge who tried Daniel J. Ellsberg, the man who made public the Pentagon papers.

On April 25, 1973, while he was Army vice chief of staff, Haig took the stand in the closing days of the Ellsberg trial as a surprise rebuttal witness for the government. The purpose was to undermine Halperin's testimony as an expert witness on Ellsberg's behalf.

When Haig testified, he was one of the handful of people who knew that Ellsberg had been overheard on the then-secret wiretaps. In fact, Haig knew from the summaries that Ellsberg had been heard on the tap of Halperin's phone. Because the government had previously given assurances that Ellsberg had not been picked up on any federal wiretaps, however, this matter did not come up when Haig testified at the trial.

Nine days later, Haig was named Nixon's chief of staff. That same day, May 4, 1973, newly appointed acting FBI Director William Ruckelshaus started an inquiry into the White House wiretapping program because, as he said at the time, "I was informed by FBI employees that these [wiretaps] had been performed and that the records relating to them were missing from the FBI files."

The story of the hiding of the wiretap records and their subsequent discovery has never been fully explored. Because Haig was a key participant, his confirmation hearings might provide an opportunity to clear up this loose end of Watergate.

The issue is whether the wiretap records were hidden in the White House to avoid having to produce them for the Ellsberg trial.

The story starts two years earlier, on July 2, 1971, when FBI Director Hoover was requested by Robert Mardian, then an assistant attorney general, to search for any wiretap records showing that conversations involving Ellsberg had been picked up. This was a routine procedure in conjunction with the opening of pretrial activities in Ellsberg's case. A week later, another search was requested for any signs that Halperin had been tapped by the FBI.

Within days, Sullivan told Mardian of the White House taps. On July 11, Mardian spoke directly to Nixon about what to do with the records, which contained material on Ellsberg and Halperin.

Nixon, according to Mardian, ordered him to collect the records and bring them to the White House.

This was done, Mardian later told the FBI, and Haig and Kissinger participated in determining that all the logs they knew about were there.

On July 12, Hoover sent Mardian official notice that there were no wiretap records on Ellsberg; three days later Hoover sent the same notice for Halperin. In neither message did Hoover refer to the taps whose records were then at the White House.

Thus, when the Ellsberg trial started, no information was provided on the taps that had covered both the defendant and his key defense witness.

In May 1973, two years after the government originally assured the judge in the Ellsberg case that there were no wiretaps that would affect the proceeding, Ruckelshaus had to inform the court that this was not true. Ruckelshaus also had to tell the judge that he could not locate records of the tap that did pick up an Ellsberg conversation.

Haig, by then Nixon's chief of staff, was one of the few men who knew where those records were — in the White House. But he said nothing publicly at the time.

However, when Haig gave a deposition in October 1974, in a civil suit brought by Halperin against the government, he said: "One of the first things that was brought to my attention [when he became chief of staff]... was the fact that the Ellsberg trial was in a hung-up state because the judge out there had requested any electronic surveillance that may have taken place on Mr. Ellsberg."

Haig went on, "I told Mr. [Leonard] Garment [then White House counsel]... that I knew there had been some such a wiretap and we should send it out to the judge. We then got in touch with Mr. Ruckelshaus and with Justice."

Ruckelshaus' public statements at the time and the FBI record that has been made public since do not suggest that Haig played any role at all in locating the wiretap records. According to these records, it was Sullivan, who had then left the FBI, and Mardian, who had left the Justice Department, who pointed Ruckelshaus to the White House in his search for the wiretap records.

Haig, however, maintained in 1974 that "I instituted a search in the White House, and lo and behold, we found... them in Ehrlichman's files, in a cardboard box so big."

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Garment does not remember Haig's version and Ruckelshaus has been unavailable for comment. Haig, however, could clear up — perhaps with the help of some White House tapes of presidential conversations — whether the wiretaps were hidden in 1971 to avoid their disclosure at the Ellsberg trial and why he did not step forward on May 9, 1973, and declare their existence.

On June 20, 1975, the Watergate special prosecutor summoned Haig to appear before a federal grand jury in Washington to testify about his role in the wiretaps. The contents of that testimony, which is sealed by the court, has never been revealed.

This report was written by staff writers Scott Armstrong, Robert G. Kaiser and Walter Pincus.

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The 17 White House national security wiretaps began in May 1969 and continued until February 1971. Alexander M. Haig Jr., then a member of the National Security Council staff, provided the names of 12 of the people to be tapped, according to the FBI. It was Haig who read and evaluated the results of most of the taps — largely personal information.

Over that time, thousands of individuals were overheard talking to the subjects of the taps. Among those tapped were White House, State and Defense officials and several well-known reporters. Here is a list of those tapped in the order in which the taps were placed, the duration of the tap and whether Haig was recorded by the FBI as the requestor:

- Morton H. Halperin, an NSC staffer, from January through September 1969 and later a consultant to Democratic presidential candidate Edmund S. Muskie, was tapped from May 9, 1969, to Feb. 10, 1971. Haig supplied his name May 10, though Hoover is said to have begun the tap on his own after a phone call from the White House.

- Daniel Davidson, an NSC staff member from January through May 1969 who Hoover demanded be fired, according to Haig, "based on the surveillance." His tap ran from May 12, 1969, to Sept. 15, 1969. Haig supplied his name to the FBI, though he maintains Hoover proposed it.

17 Were Subjects of Wiretaps From May '69 to February '71

- Col. Robert E. Pursley, then-Defense Secretary Melvin Laird's military assistant and a holdover from earlier administrations, was first tapped May 12, 1969, through May 27, 1969. In the wake of the Cambodian invasion, another tap went on on May 4, 1970, and remained until Feb. 10, 1971. In both cases, Haig supplied his name to the FBI.

- Helmut Sonnenfeldt was an NSC Soviet specialist who had served in the State Department in the previous Democratic administration. He was tapped from May 12, 1969, through Feb. 10, 1971. Haig provided his name to the FBI. A renewed surveillance was at the request of H.R. Haldeman, then-chief of staff at the White House.

- Richard L. Sneider was an NSC staff member on loan from the State Department who later became U.S. ambassador to Korea. He was tapped from May 20, 1969, to June 20, 1969. Haig provided his name to the FBI.

- Richard M. Moose was an NSC staff member who had served in that position under a previous administration. He later became a key member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff and then assistant secretary of state for Africa under the Carter administration. Moose was tapped from May 20 to June 20, 1969. His name was provided to the FBI by Haig.

- Henry Brandon was the London Sunday Times correspondent in Washington,

who was friendly with Henry Kissinger and according to Kissinger's testimony "was presented by FBI Director Hoover to the president as a man who had connections with an allied foreign intelligence service." The tap on Brandon lasted from May 29 to Feb. 10, 1971. Haig formally provided the name, although Kissinger has testified that Brandon also was tapped as a result of Hoover's comments to Nixon.

- Hedrick Smith, a reporter for the New York Times Washington bureau, was tapped from June 4, 1969, to Aug. 31, 1969. Kissinger requested the FBI tap.

- John Sears was an assistant to White House counsel John Ehrlichman and later became the campaign manager for Ronald Reagan until he was fired last February. Sears was tapped from July 23, 1969, to Oct. 2, 1969, and was the subject of physical surveillance part of that time. Attorney General John Mitchell requested the tap on Sears.

- William A. Safire was a White House speech-writer and is now a New York Times columnist. He was tapped from Aug. 4, 1969, to Sept. 15, 1969. Safire also was overheard on taps of a newsman's phone during which he was, according to a House impeachment committee document, "reported only to have dealt with domestic speeches, papers dealing with economics . . . and the political philosophy of the administration." Haig requested the tap on Safire's phones.

- Marvin Kalb was a reporter with CBS

who is now with NBC. He was tapped from Sept. 10, 1969, through Nov. 4, 1969, at the request of Mitchell.

- William Beecher was a reporter for the New York Times who is now with the Boston Globe. He was tapped from May 4, 1970, to Feb. 20, 1971. Haig provided his name to the FBI.

- Richard F. Pedersen was a counselor to the State Department during the Paris peace talks and later became U.S. ambassador to Hungary. Pedersen was tapped from May 4, 1970, to Feb. 10, 1971. Haig asked the FBI to tap his phones.

- William H. Sullivan had been ambassador to Laos and was at the time deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs. Under President Carter, Sullivan served as U.S. ambassador to Iran. He was tapped from May 4, 1970, to Feb. 10, 1971. Haig requested the tap from the FBI.

- Anthony Lake was an NSC staff specialist on Vietnam who later became head of the Policy and Planning Office of the State Department under the Carter administration. Lake was tapped from May 13, 1970, to Feb. 10, 1971. Haig requested the FBI institute the tap.

- Winston Lord was a China specialist on the NSC staff who later became head of the Policy and Planning Office of the State Department under Kissinger. Lord was tapped from May 13, 1970, through Feb. 10, 1971. Haig requested that the FBI install the tap.

- James W. McLane was a staff member of the domestic council with ties to such "liberal" Republicans as former Health, Education and Welfare secretary Robert Finch and his father-in-law Francis W. Sargent, former governor of Massachusetts. McLane was tapped from Dec. 12, 1970, to Jan. 27, 1971, at Haldeman's request.

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Raising the Option of a Nixon Pardon

Ford Says Haig Broached 'Agreement' in Return for the Resignation

The General And His Record — III

Eight days before Gerald R. Ford became president of the United States, Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., Richard M. Nixon's chief of staff, broached to Ford a troubling possibility. Haig listed the options available to Nixon, including "an agreement" that Nixon would resign the presidency if Ford agreed to give him a pardon. What, Haig asked, did Ford recommend?

That was Aug. 1, 1974. The next day brought near panic for three men close to Ford. Robert Hartmann, one of those aides, has described the anxiety vividly in his memoirs.

Hartmann, former congressman Jack Marsh and Bryce Harlow, three of Ford's most intimate political associates, agreed that day that Haig had done something that might endanger Ford by discussing with him the possibility of a pardon for Nixon. Hartmann felt Haig was guilty of a "monstrous impropriety." These three men shared their anxiety with Ford on the afternoon of the 2nd.

By Ford's own account (a little-noted revelation in his memoirs), Haig had told him on Aug. 1 that unnamed persons "on Nixon's staff" had said that "Nixon could agree to leave [office] in return for an agreement that the new president — Gerald Ford — would pardon him." In other words, as Ford described the conversation in his book, Haig had mentioned the possibility of a quid pro quo — a resignation for a pardon.

On Sept. 8, 1974, Ford did pardon

Nixon for any crimes he may have committed in office, raising the question of whether there had been a secret Nixon-Ford agreement. When Haig faces the Senate Foreign Relations Committee next month in confirmation hearings on his nomination to be secretary of state, the question may become, was Haig offering Ford the presidency in return for a pardon for his boss?

At that meeting on Aug. 2, 1974, Harlow told Ford: "There must not be any cause for anyone to cry 'deal'

The most urgent thing, Mr. Vice President, is to tell Al Haig straight out and unequivocally that whatever discussions you and he had yesterday . . . were purely hypothetical and conversational; that you will in no manner, affirmatively or negatively, advise him or the president as to his future course"

It was a stern lecture, but it worked. Ford got his aides' message that any arrangement involving a pardon for Nixon in return for his resignation could destroy his presidency before it began.

Ford picked up the telephone and called Haig at once. "I want you to understand," Ford said, according to his memoirs, "that I have no intention of recommending what the president should do about resigning or not resigning and that nothing we talked about yesterday afternoon should be given any consideration in whatever decision the president may wish to make."

"You're right," Haig replied, ending the conversation.

Ten weeks later, after Nixon had resigned and after Ford had pardoned him, the new president went to Capitol Hill to testify on whether the two men had made a deal. Ford testified emphatically that they had not. However, no one asked Ford specifically that day if a deal had been offered.

Ford's testimony to a House subcommittee on Oct. 17, 1974, provided the first account of his dealings with Haig on Aug. 1. Haig, Ford said then, told him he had to be ready to assume the presidency quickly, because a newly uncovered White House tape would destroy Nixon's impeachment defense. Haig, Ford testified, asked for Ford's recommendations "on the various courses of action as well as my attitude on the options of resignation. However, he [Haig] indicated he was not advocating any of the options."

Haig laid out six options, only one of which would have required any action on Ford's part. As Ford described it in his congressional testimony, Haig said that sixth option was "a pardon to the president [Nixon] himself, should he resign."

On page 4 of his 1979 autobiography, *A Time To Heal*, Ford elaborates substantially on what he told the House subcommittee in 1974. In the book, Ford describes Haig's sixth option like this: "Finally, Haig said that according to some on Nixon's White House staff, Nixon could agree to leave [office] in return for an agreement that the new president — Gerald Ford — would pardon him."

It was this passage in Ford's memoirs that prompted Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.), the Republican leader in the Senate, to caution President-elect Ronald Reagan three weeks ago that nominating Haig for secretary of state could produce a contentious confirmation process for Nixon's former chief of staff.

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Ford's House testimony in 1974 was hastily prepared in the White House. Haig has said since that he helped to prepare it (he was still working in the White House at the time). Ford's book was the product of detailed research, interviews conducted by a ghost writer who helped the former president, and a careful drafting process in which many of Ford's White House aides were consulted. According to knowledgeable sources, the crucial passage on page 4 was drafted to be consistent with the House testimony, but also to provide a more complete account of Ford's dealings with Haig on Aug. 1.

Ford's memoir, Nixon's *RN* and Hartmann's 1980 book, *Palace Politics: An Inside Account of the Ford Years*, all add new information to the version of these events that Ford gave in his House testimony. None of them contradict Ford's assurance that he made no deal with Nixon. But taken together they do provide a chronology of events that could be the basis for previously unanswered questions to Haig in his confirmation hearings. (Haig has never been asked to testify on these events.)

Here is a brief account of the events surrounding Nixon's resignation drawn from these sources:

According to his memoirs, Nixon first decided to resign on Aug. 1, eight days before he actually did step down. "On Thursday, August 1, I told Haig I had decided to resign. If the June 23 tape [the notorious "smoking gun"] was not explainable, I could not very well expect the staff to try to explain and defend it."

Nixon told Haig he planned to resign in a televised speech the following Monday, the 5th. "Haig said that we could work out the arrangements however I wanted, but he suggested that I resign even sooner, perhaps the next night, Friday, August 2. Since the June 23 tape was in the group to be handed over to Judge [John] Sirica that morning, Haig thought that I should have resigned and been gone from the scene before the tape surfaced publicly. By that time, he said, so much attention would be focused on the new president that the damaging impact of the tape might be muted."

"I decided to think about it. . . I also asked Haig to see Jerry Ford and tell him that I was thinking of resigning, without indicating when. I said Haig should ask him to be prepared to take over sometime within the next few days."

Shortly after noon on the 1st, Haig

telephoned Ford in the vice president's office in the Capitol. The two men had already met that morning; in the presence of Hartmann, and Haig had warned Ford that he had to be ready to assume the presidency. Ford has written that Haig "seemed surprised" by Hartmann's presence, "and I had the impression that he didn't feel he could be as forthright as he might normally have been."

At Haig's request, he and Ford were alone at their second meeting of the day. It was then that Haig listed for Ford six options open to Nixon, a list prepared by White House lawyer J. Fred Buzhardt at Nixon's request. Buzhardt told reporters before his death that his sixth option was that Nixon could resign and "hope" for a pardon from his successor. But by Ford's account this became an explicit "agreement" about a resignation in return for a pardon when Haig outlined it to the vice president. Nixon's other options, according to Haig, ranged from riding out an impeachment trial in the Senate to pardoning himself and everyone else in Watergate and then resigning.

The record raises questions about just what was said on Aug. 1. Nixon writes that he told Haig that morning that he had decided to resign. However, according to Ford's recollections, Haig gave no hint of that when he met with the vice president for the second time that day. While warning Ford that he had to be ready to assume the presidency soon, Haig also portrayed Nixon as still being in a fighting mood, dismissing the smoking gun tape as "manageable."

According to Ford's book, Haig "asked if I had any suggestions as to the courses of action for the president. I didn't think it would be proper for me to make any recommendations at all, and I told him so. Because of his references to pardon authority, I did ask Haig about the extent of a president's pardon power."

"It's my understanding from a White House lawyer," Haig replied, "that a president does have the authority to grant a pardon even before criminal action has been taken against an individual." He didn't name the lawyer.

Ford writes that after Haig left that meeting, he told his aide Hartmann what had transpired.

"As I repeated the options that Haig had listed for me," Ford wrote of this conversation with Hartmann, "warning bells seemed to go off inside his head. 'That's why you should have had a witness there,' he said. 'That last option Haig mentioned, that Nixon resign in return for an agreement that he receive a pardon from the new president, I don't like that at all.'"

"'But Bob,' I replied, 'Al wasn't suggesting that. It was just one of the ideas that he said were being kicked around by people at the White House.'"

"I know, I know [Hartmann replied]. But Haig didn't come over here to go away empty-handed. And he didn't discuss this delicate matter without Nixon's knowing about it. And he mentioned the pardon option, and you sat there listening to him. Well, silence implies assent. He probably went back to the White House and told Nixon that he'd mentioned the idea and that you weren't uncomfortable with it. It was extremely improper for him to bring the subject up."

Ford writes that he told Hartmann he was "making a mountain out of a molehill."

But that night Haig and Ford had a telephone conversation that is a matter of dispute between Ford and his longtime aide, Hartmann. Ford's book says Haig called the vice president at about 1:30 a.m. on the night of Aug. 1-2 and said: "Nothing has changed. The situation is as fluid as ever."

Ford writes that he replied: "Well, I've talked with Betty [his wife], and we're prepared, but we can't get involved in the White House decision-making process."

Hartmann, however, writes that Ford gave him a substantially different description of this call the next morning. This is Hartmann's account of what Ford told him:

"Betty and I talked it over last night. . . We felt we were ready. This just has to stop; it's tearing the country to pieces. I decided to go ahead and get it over with, so I called Al Haig and told him they should do whatever they decided to do; it was all right with me."

Hartmann, writing after the publication of Ford's memoirs, acknowledges the discrepancy between his and Ford's accounts of that phone call. "Memories are fallible," Hartmann writes in a footnote, "but I know what most upset me was the fact that Ford had called Haig. Why would Haig telephone the vice president at 1:30 a.m. just to say nothing had changed? And why, if Ford informed Haig that night that 'we can't get involved,' did he have to go through it all over again the next day for Harlow, Marsh and me?"

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This is a reference to the sequence of events that followed the next day, Aug. 2. Ford briefed Marsh that morning on his dealings with Haig since the previous day, and Marsh agreed with Hartmann, Ford writes, "that the mere mention of the pardon option constituted a potential time bomb for me. I explained that Haig was not suggesting a deal, that these options hadn't even originated with him, that I had said nothing to signal approval or disapproval of them."

Ford then turned to Bryce Harlow, a trusted friend, and reviewed the same events with him. Harlow too, Ford writes, "let me know in no uncertain terms that he agreed . . . that the mere mention of the pardon option could cause a lot of trouble in the days ahead."

"We agreed that the only thing I [Ford] could do would be to call Haig in the presence of witnesses and button this thing down. Minutes later, Haig was on the line. I had written out in longhand what I wanted to say to him, and I read it slowly so that there could be no ambiguities. I want you to understand, I said, that I have no intention of recommending what the president should do about resigning . . ."

It was that phone call, already quoted above, that Hartmann thought would have been superfluous if Ford really had told Haig by phone in the middle of the previous night that "we can't get involved in the White House decision-making process." Hartmann's book suggests that instead, Ford may have said something indiscreet to Haig in that phone conversation. "God knows what they'd said to make matters worse," writes Hartmann.

Little is known about Haig's contacts with Nixon between the time of his resignation and Sept. 7, when Ford pardoned him, and about his advice to Ford during the same period, when he was the new president's acting chief of staff. Haig has never been asked to testify in these matters, and Ford has touched on them only briefly.

Ford writes in his memoirs that when he did begin to consider granting a pardon to Nixon, he consulted with several aides, including Haig. "Haig was for it," Ford writes, "although he never flatly said as much. He laid out the pros and cons, then stepped back and said, 'It's your decision, sir.'"

At the same time, Ford asked Marsh what he thought about the

pardon, and Marsh quickly recalled the Aug. 1 Ford-Haig exchanges: "Look, both of us know about the meeting with Haig . . . the meeting where he discussed a pardon as one of several options available at the time. Although you and I understand the two are not related, will people try to connect them?"

According to his memoirs, Ford replied: "Maybe they will, but we both know the facts."

Ford was referring to the facts about his motivation in granting Nixon a pardon, not to Haig's motivation in initially raising the option of a pardon "agreement."

Haig's many admirers have long insisted that the general's actions in the final days of the Nixon presidency were only intended to achieve a smooth transition of power from a discredited chief executive to his successor while avoiding any constitutional crises.

This report was written by staff writers Scott Armstrong, Robert G. Kaiser and Walter Pincus.

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Haig: Operating Outside Channels In Chilean, Indochinese Affairs

The General
And His Record — IV

Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., Ronald Reagan's nominee to be the next secretary of state, brings an unusual record to this new assignment. Though Haig has been thoroughly exposed to foreign policy issues under five presidents from Kennedy to Carter, he has never played the part of a traditional diplomat.

On the contrary, much of Haig's experience in foreign policy and national security matters came under circumstances in which he and his superiors were deliberately acting outside normal diplomatic channels. In two cases where Haig played an important personal role — secret aspects of the Nixon administration's policies in the Indochina war and in Chile — part of his responsibility was to exclude State Department officials from any knowledge of what he was doing. The wiretapping program that Haig oversaw for the Nixon White House included taps on the phones of several American diplomats.

Haig's record includes a direct role in the secret bombing of Cambodia, personal urging of the Christmas bombing of 1972 around Hanoi and Haiphong, and active involvement in the Nixon administration's secret attempts to influence Chilean elections and then to prevent elected Marxist President Salvador Allende from

coming to power, finally by trying to promote a military coup.

Until the 1974-79 period, when Haig was supreme allied commander in Europe, most of his career was spent as a staff man. One of the first men Haig served as a staff aide was Gen. Alonzo Fox, his father-in-law. In the Kennedy administration he worked in the Pentagon for Cyrus R.

Vance (then general counsel of the Department of Defense) and Joseph A. Califano Jr. (general counsel of the Army.)

In 1969, at Califano's urging, Henry A. Kissinger made Haig his military aide on the National Security Council staff, and in 1970 Haig became deputy national security adviser. In 1973 Haig took over the quintessential staff job — chief of staff to President Nixon.

In his years of public service, Haig rarely has had to take explicit public positions on policy issues. He is better known for giving loyal support to the

policies of his superiors. His respect for the "commander-in-chief" is legendary.

Several Democratic senators have said they plan to question Haig about his attitudes as a military man toward traditional diplomacy and about his role in controversial foreign policy actions in the Nixon years at his confirmation hearings next month.

Another issue likely to come up in the confirmation hearings is Haig's attitude toward the role of Congress in foreign affairs. As NATO commander, Haig more than once lectured visiting senators and representatives on the failures of Congress, particularly the arms embargo against Turkey, which he decried as contrary to the interests of the alliance. According to witnesses, Haig was once briefing a Senate delegation when then-Sen. William Scott (R-Va.) suddenly slammed his hand down on the table and said, "Gen. Haig, I hear arrogance coming out of your mouth!"

Haig's many admirers, on the other hand, say he can provide strong, decisive leadership, and that his experience would help him succeed as secretary of state.

Haig and Chile

Haig's involvement in covert operations against Chile is partially recorded in the published record of the Senate Intelligence Committee's report on *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*.

On March 25, 1970, the Cabinet-level 40 Committee (the Nixon administration group that reviewed and passed judgment on top secret covert action projects) approved a joint embassy/CIA proposal recommending that "spoiling" operations — propaganda and other activities — be undertaken by the CIA in an effort to

prevent an election victory by Marxist candidate Allende, according to a Senate Intelligence Committee report.

In addition to a total of \$800,000 to \$1 million in covert action funds, International Telephone & Telegraph, fearing the nationalization of its highly lucrative Chilean facilities, contributed \$350,000 and coordinated efforts that proceeded parallel to the CIA scheme.

Outside the 40 Committee's members (the national security adviser, the secretaries of defense, state and treasury and the CIA director), only the U.S. ambassador to Chile, Edward Korry, and a small cadre of CIA operatives were aware of the activities. But, according to sources familiar with the Intelligence Committee's investigations, another person at the White House was aware of the project — Haig, who was the regular liaison between the NSC staff and the CIA on this and most other sensitive projects.

The covert campaign to influence the Chilean election was unsuccessful, and Allende won a plurality of the popular vote. After the election the 40 Committee met again to discuss "what action should be taken prior to the October 24 congressional vote" that would confirm Allende's election and install him in power. The committee authorized another series of covert moves, including political, economic and propaganda activities designed "to induce Allende's opponents in Chile to prevent his assumption of power, either through political or military means."

Again, knowledge of these activities was restricted to a tiny group, and Haig was the regular contact point at the NSC staff for the secret operations.

On Sept. 15, President Nixon told CIA director Richard Helms that an Allende regime in Chile would not be acceptable to the United States and instructed the CIA to play a direct role in organizing a military coup d'etat in Chile to prevent Allende's accession to the presidency." Helms testified to the Senate Intelligence Committee, "If I ever carried a marshal's baton in my knapsack out of the Oval Office, it was that day."

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Thus began a second chain of covert actions parallel to those authorized by the 40 Committee, the so-called "Track II" as it was known by Nixon, Kissinger and Haig. Track II was to be so secret that Nixon told Helms to tell no one in the State Department about it, not even the secretary of state or the U.S. ambassador to Chile. Nixon also told Helms to hide Track II from members of the 40 Committee, who were formally charged with approving such secret actions.

Instead, Helms had the CIA's deputy director for plans (covert action), Thomas Karamessines, provide Kissinger and Haig with regular briefings on developments in Track II. According to informed sources, the Intelligence Committee investigation concluded that Haig was the de facto "executive officer" of Track II, keeping tabs on it for the president.

What Karamessines reported to Haig (and to Kissinger on the few occasions he was in town during that period) was this:

The CIA had 21 contacts with key military and police officials inclined to stage a coup attempt and gave them assurances of "strong support at the highest levels of the U.S. government." The "major obstacle" facing the military conspirators was "the strong opposition to a coup by the commander in chief of the army, Gen. Rene Schneider, who insisted the constitutional process be followed."

The CIA's agents suggested that Schneider could be removed. Their Chilean contacts then devised a coup plan, beginning with the abduction of Schneider, that the CIA endorsed.

On Oct. 15, Karamessines met with Kissinger and Haig at the White House and reported in detail, according to the CIA record of the meeting, on "the general situation in Chile from the coup-possibility viewpoint." One particular plot by a group of conspirators led by a Chilean general named Roberto Viaux was discussed. All present at the meeting agreed that the Viaux plot should be turned off for the time being.

But it was too late to turn off the Viaux plot and his group made two unsuccessful attempts to kidnap Schneider. Another group of military plotters affiliated with the Viaux group and encouraged by the CIA then tried its own plan to kidnap Schneider and in the accompanying skirmish, Schneider was killed.

Kissinger and Haig have denied any responsibility or foreknowledge of the second coup group which assassinated Schneider.

The Senate select committee's investigative files on these events reveal fundamental contradictions between the testimony of Haig and Kissinger on one hand and CIA officials on the other. The most significant conflict is about the Oct. 15 meeting.

Haig and Kissinger, according to the Intelligence Committee, "testified that on Oct. 15, 1970, the White House stood down CIA efforts to promote a military coup d'etat in Chile. Both testified that after that date they were neither informed of, nor authorized, CIA Track II activities, including the kidnap plans for General Schneider...."

"By contrast, CIA officials testified that they operated before and after Oct. 15 with the knowledge and approval of the White House."

Kissinger testified not only that he turned off the coup plan but also that "he was informed of no coup plan which began with the abduction of General Schneider." He was aware of Viaux's plan — which he and Karamessines decided on Oct. 15 to try to forestall — but did not know that it was to begin with Schneider's abduction.

According to the report, "General Haig's testimony generally coincided with Kissinger's recollection." Haig's full testimony has never been made public.

But CIA officials insisted to the Intelligence Committee that "close consultation" with Kissinger and Haig continued throughout.

The Intelligence Committee's report raises another question on the matter of White House authorization of the Viaux group's kidnap attempt. This was the plot that the United States tried to call off after the Oct. 15 Kissinger-Haig-Karamessines meeting. The question is who, if anyone, in the White House originally cleared the CIA to give Viaux the go-ahead?

The most recent previous contact between Karamessines and the White House that the committee's investigators could learn of was with Haig Oct. 10. But Haig testified that he had given no authorization for the Viaux plot Oct. 10.

Apparently, the Senate Intelligence Committee was unaware that President Nixon's secret White House logs — logs that The Washington Post has seen — show that Karamessines met privately with Nixon himself at 11:05 a.m. on Oct. 13. Although the logs do not list Haig as a participant in that meeting, given his intimate involvement in Track II at the time, he would be an excellent witness on the subject of the meeting. Apparently, Haig has never been asked to explain this sequence.

Karamessines has testified that "Track II was never really ended," a statement that has never been fully clarified. Karamessines also testified that he met with Haig on Oct. 19, 1970, when he "would have" told Haig about the second coup group's plan that resulted in Schneider's assassination three days later. Haig denies ever learning of any plan to kidnap Schneider.

Another unresolved Chilean matter is the never-publicized accusation by former ambassador Korry that nine assassination attempts grew out of Track II, including one against Allende.

Haig and Indochina

From the beginning of his service on Kissinger's National Security Council staff, Haig was intimately involved in the conduct of the Indochina war. After the American invasion of Cambodia in 1970, Haig became a principal link between the Nixon administration and President Lon Nol of Cambodia, urging the Cambodian in a series of personal meetings to build up his army and continue fighting the North Vietnamese. In the last stages of the American involvement, when Kissinger was trying to tie up a peace agreement with North Vietnam, Haig differed with his mentor, recommending tougher negotiating positions and harsher military actions than Kissinger favored.

Haig was present at the initial breakfast meeting in the Pentagon in early 1969 where a secret bombing campaign against Vietnamese sanctuaries in Cambodia was discussed. This led to Operation Breakfast, then to Operation Menu, both clandestine bombing operations that continued for many months. Defense Department records were altered to hide these operations, and Congress was not told of their existence. Haig was in on them from the beginning.

In early 1970, when the White House was considering possible moves

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against the sanctuaries in Cambodia, Haig gave orders to the Pentagon officials involved that they tell the State Department nothing about these deliberations, according to the military aide to Melvin Laird, then defense secretary.

According to White House officials who worked with Kissinger and Haig, Cambodia was Haig's special responsibility, particularly when it became an active battleground after the Lon Nol coup that overthrew Prince Norodom Sihanouk in early 1970. Lon Nol never had an easy time mobilizing or leading his country, and it fell to Haig to personally reassure and encourage him, and also to oversee for the White House efforts to bolster the Cambodians.

Haig's first personal mission abroad for the White House was a trip to Cambodia in May 1970, just after the beginning of the U.S. offensive into Cambodian territory. Haig set the pattern for his role on that first trip by declining to invite the American charge d'affaires in Phnom Penh, Mike Rives, to accompany him when he met with Lon Nol, and declining to tell him after the meeting what had transpired.

Later a Korean war acquaintance of Haig's, Jonathan (Fred) Ladd, was invited by Kissinger to become the civilian chief of the American military aid program in Cambodia. Ladd took the job. Later in Phnom Penh he dealt directly with Haig in Washington, sometimes without the knowledge of his diplomatic superiors.

According to White House officials who worked with Haig at the time, the general privately accused both of his bosses — Kissinger and Nixon — of being too "weak" on Vietnam. Haig repeatedly encouraged Nixon to be tough with the North Vietnamese, offering harder-line advice than any of Nixon's other intimate advisers. For

example, Haig was an ardent proponent of the 1972 Christmas bombing around Hanoi and Haiphong.

Colleagues from Haig's White House days say that Haig often urged military action in policy deliberations involving other parts of the world, too. Military solutions have appealed to Haig more recently: in January 1979, when he was the NATO commander in Europe, Haig recommended that the United States encourage the Iranian military to take control of the country.

On the other hand, Haig has often said privately that it fell to him to restrain both Kissinger and Nixon during his White House service. If the Senate Foreign Relations Committee tries to determine precisely what policy advice Haig himself gave in those years, Haig could face a delicate choice between revealing the advice he gave President Nixon or asserting executive privilege.

This report was written by staff writers Scott Armstrong and Robert G. Kaiser.